

**LINCOLN POLICE DEPARTMENT
COMMUNITY SERVICES UNIT**

THE “EYE”

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

JANUARY-MARCH 2003

COMMUNITY BASED CRIME PREVENTION IS STILL AN IMPORTANT FACTOR

The importance of community crime prevention programs, such as Neighborhood Watch, has been reaffirmed by recent incidents including the “Maryland Sniper Case.” Multiple law enforcement agencies from the local level on up to the federal level were involved in that investigation. Elite trained units, high-tech equipment, and even U.S. Army surveillance planes were used in the manhunt. While all of those resources proved useful, the solution of the case came down to the basic tenet of crime investigation and prevention: A citizen communicated information about what they had seen to the police.

This same idea of sharing information with the police and with our neighbors remains important in this period of our history while we are concerned about national security. The safety of our own community relies on citizens’ willingness to call the police and report suspicious activity. Sharing that information with neighbors increases everyone’s level of awareness and makes our neighborhoods safer. Remember, that as a Neighborhood Watch Group, we want you to be “The eyes and ears of the Lincoln Police Department.” We want citizens to feel comfortable calling the police department because otherwise we may not know what is happening. If you witness an incident that is in progress, we want you to call **911**. If you are aware of an incident that already occurred and everyone involved has left, we want you to call **441-6000**. Both of those phone numbers reach the Lincoln Lancaster Communications Center where all emergencies and calls (medical, fire, or police) are dispatched. The operators there have a direct link to the officers who are on patrol in your neighborhood. A community effort, involving your neighborhoods and the police, is needed to prevent, and combat, crime.

For other information on citizen awareness and general preparedness, citizens can contact:

The Federal Emergency Management Agency at: 1-800-480-2520 or
www.fema.gov

A comprehensive “Citizens’ Preparedness Guide” from the National Crime Prevention Council can be downloaded from:

www.weprevent.org

WINTER DRIVING (we hope not– but...)

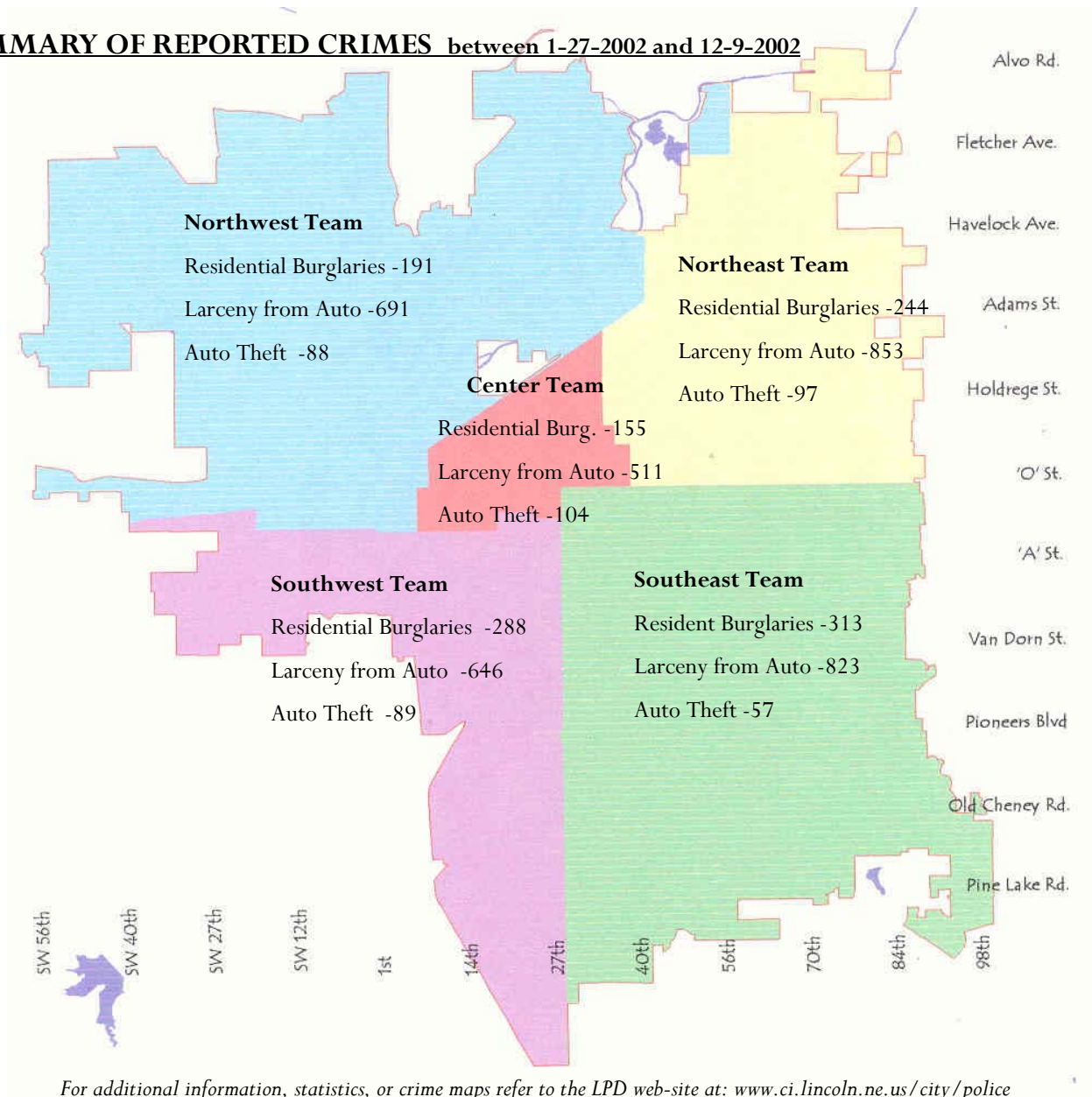


We’ve all seen the person driving down the road in a snow covered vehicle with only a small porthole sized spot cleared on the windshield in front of the driver. The driver can not possibly see anything except an area directly in front of their vehicle. Visibility is one of the most important things to consider, especially in snowy or icy road conditions. Drivers should clear all snow and ice from the windshield, side windows, and rear window. Also clear off the wiper arms and blades, the window washer nozzles, and all of the lights – headlights, tail lights, and turn signals. Snow and ice should also be removed from the hood particularly at the ventilation intake grate that is usually at the base of the windshield. The intake grate allows air into the vehicle’s ventilation system which allows the defrost feature to clear any frost accumulated inside the car.

Being able to maintain traction on snowy and icy roads is another important consideration. The most important thing to do is to drive smoothly. Do not make any sudden or abrupt movements – no sudden turns, no harsh acceleration or braking. If the road is snowy or icy a sudden change in movement will cause a loss of traction and the vehicle will go into a slide or a spin. If the vehicle does go into a slide, back off the accelerator immediately and then think about pushing smoothly and gradually on the brake pedal. If the vehicle has the anti-lock braking feature it will engage and assist in braking smoothly without locking up the wheels which makes the slide worse. If your vehicle does not have anti-lock brakes then you should gently pump the brakes to slow the vehicle and stop the slide. If your vehicle begins to spin, back off the accelerator immediately and then turn your steering wheel in the same direction as the rear of vehicle is beginning to move. Continue to slow down until control of the vehicle is regained.

Driving on snowy or icy roadways requires you to keep looking and thinking well ahead. Plan for future turns and stops and anticipate what the traffic in front of you is doing. Care and planning should help you avoid those wintry accidents.



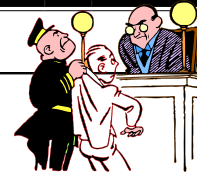
SUMMARY OF REPORTED CRIMES between 1-27-2002 and 12-9-2002**CRIME STATISTICS OVERVIEW**

Neighborhoods continue to be plagued with larcenies from autos. To avoid being victimized residents should remember to remove all valuables from their car. Take belongings into the home or at least secure them in the trunk where they can not be seen. Unlocked vehicles are still the most frequently targeted so be sure to lock it up when you leave.

Residential burglaries are also a concern. As in larcenies from vehicles, the most frequently targeted homes are those that are left unlocked. Get in the habit of thinking about security when you leave home. Check to make sure that windows and doors are closed and locked. Remember also that leaving the garage door open, or unlocked, is an invitation to criminals.

There has been a moderate rise in auto thefts recently. Removing your keys and locking the vehicle will help to prevent this. During these winter months some vehicles are stolen while the owner leaves them unattended but running to warm them up. Your car actually warms up more efficiently if you begin to drive it in a moderate manner than if you leave it idling.

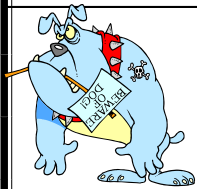
Recently several vandalisms were cleared up when an alert citizen called the police to report some suspicious behavior. Two young men had been walking along a row of parked cars scratching them with a pocket knife as they went. So, do not ever hesitate to call the police when you observe anything that you believe could be suspicious or criminal in nature.



OUTSTANDING TEAMWORK !

On October 1, 2002 a group of your police officers worked together to catch four car thieves and clear several related crimes. At about 7:00 a.m., Officer Larry Bratt was taking a report on a stolen car. Officer Bratt made a broadcast on the police radio describing the car so that other officers would know about it. Having heard this information, Officer Mike Barry began patrolling his area looking for the car. Within three hours, Officer Barry observed the car traveling on the roadway with four people in it. When Officer Barry tried to stop the stolen car, the driver sped away in an attempt to evade being caught. Officer David Munn heard the initial attempt to stop the car and then began to assist Officer Barry in catching the thieves. As the stolen car began to weave through residential streets, Officers Barry and Munn were able to coordinate their efforts in following the car in a manner that ensured citizens' safety in the area. Eventually, the thieves tried to go off-road and drove into a construction area. The car became bogged down in mud so the occupants then tried to flee on foot. Officers Clint Solano, Stacy Fitch, and Vandra Stutzman, arrived in the area and with the aid of some construction workers all four suspects were caught.

Officers Bratt and Munn then took control of the recovered stolen car and investigated for any other evidence. When the officers finished, items related to several other crimes had been found. The four suspects were arrested and as a result of these officers' work, six larcenies from autos, a burglary, and a stolen car were all cleared.



CHAINS OF LOVE? THINK AGAIN

by Kris Johnson Animal Control Education Officer

Some dog owners believe that dogs, especially large dogs, should be kept outdoors on a chain. Chaining your dog is not in itself inherently bad, it is when irresponsible pet owners chain their dogs up outside permanently that the problem occurs.

Dogs are social animals with a deeply ingrained need for contact with human beings and/or other dogs. It is a must. Dogs who spend most of their time alone or only in the company of other dogs may demonstrate fearful, aggressive, or overactive behavior towards family members or strangers because they've never learned how to act around people. Even a dog that gets proper care is still apt to develop serious behavior (such as neuroticism and aggression) and physical problems when their existence is ruled by a length of chain. One quarter of all dog bites reported nationally are inflicted by chained dogs. These dogs frequently become withdrawn and depressed which may result in compulsive barking, chewing or digging. People who chain up their dogs because of bad behavior only compound the situation. Many dogs are chained because the owner did not spend enough time to properly train or socialize them. The more a dog is kept outdoors, the less behavioral control the owner has. It's easier to solve four or five indoor problems than one outdoor problem. The reason is valid and simple: the more you control the stimuli that reaches your dog, the more you control the responses. You've got a lot more control over your living room than you do over your neighborhood. When your dog is bored, but teased by every dog, cat, bird, squirrel, motorcycle, paperboy, meter reader, mail carrier, airplane, firecracker and backfiring truck in your neighborhood, of course he'll dig, chew and bark. Would you sit still all day every day? When a dog is alone indoors, you are still there. Your scent and things he associates with you constantly remind the dog of you and your training. When he's out, your dog is alone whether you're home or not. If a dog is constantly chained, it will change his behavior, resulting in hyperactive or aggressive behavior. Protection and aggression are not the same thing. Protection is defensive, reactive, often passive and threatens no one. Aggression is active, harmful, offensive, threatens all and benefits no one. Aggressive dogs need professional training, not chaining. An outdoor dog has an address, not a home. Properly socialized dogs offer a real value as a companion. Stop behavioral problems and start enjoying real protection (not aggression) and companionship. Bring your dogs inside. Your neighborhood will be a happier and safer place to live.

Dear Neighborhood Watch Members,

On February 12th, 1998 I was given the opportunity to enjoy one of the most rewarding jobs offered by the Lincoln Police Department. As the coordinator for the Lincoln Neighborhood Watch Program I have had the pleasure of working with Lincoln's most caring and conscientious citizens. Lincoln, as a rule, has always had lower than average crime rates. I now know that this is due to the good people that make up this community. My rotation as the Neighborhood Watch Program Coordinator will be up as of January 15th, 2003 and I will be headed out to the Northeast Team to work for Captain Srb. Be assured the program will be left in some very capable hands. Officer Russ Lloyd, a 20 year veteran with the Lincoln Police Department, will be taking over the program.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of the volunteers who over the past 5 years have provided so much help, support and friendship.

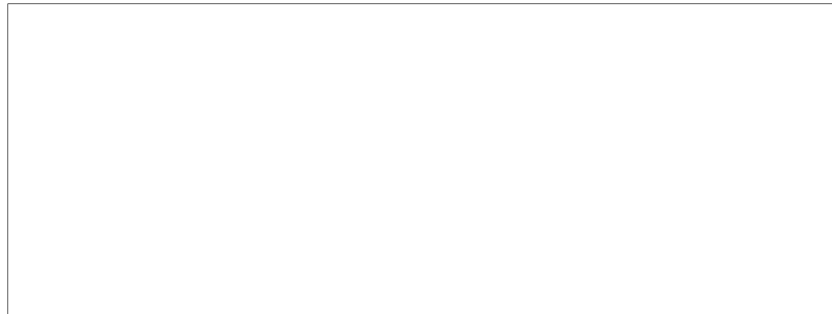
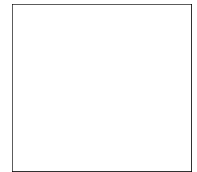
Sincerely,

Officer Ed McMeen

***The "EYE"
Neighborhood Watch***

LINCOLN POLICE DEPARTMENT
COMMUNITY SERVICES UNIT
CRIME PREVENTION
575 S. 10 ST.
LINCOLN NE, 68508

Return Service Requested



CAPTAIN'S CORNER

BY CAPTAIN KIM KOLUCH/SE TEAM



CAPT. K. KOLUCH

For policing purposes, the City of Lincoln is divided into five geographic Community Policing Teams. The Southeast Team is everything south of "O" Street and east of 27th Street to the city limits. Within the Southeast Team boundaries you will find 400 miles of roadway, 20 parks, over 30 schools and 30,000+ dwelling units. Last year the 38 officers assigned to the team responded to over 32,000 calls for service.

Larceny from vehicle continues to be the number one crime in this city, and the Southeast Team is no exception with 823 offenses this past year. The good news, this is often a crime of opportunity, which can be prevented. Nearly half of all larceny from vehicle offenses reported involves property being taken from an unlocked vehicle. In speaking with suspects arrested for this crime, we have learned that an unlocked vehicle is an open and easy invitation to take whatever is laying in plain view. Criminals will usually take the path of least resistance, if the vehicle is locked and nothing of value is visible inside the vehicle, they are twice as likely to move on to an easier target. The moral of the story, lock your car and place valuables out of sight or in the trunk.

Once again, the Southeast team is looking for interested citizens to serve on our advisory board. The group meets with team supervisors 4-5 times per year providing input on issues and serving as a link to the community. If you are interested in becoming a Southeast Team Advisory Council member contact Captain Koluch at 441-7755.